

PRESS RELEASE

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ROCOCO, REVOLUTION, RESTORATION **July 11 - September 24, 1989**

The bicentennial of the French Revolution is the occasion for a special exhibition that traces changes in European, especially French, art and culture from the middle of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th. The exhibition opens on July 11, just before the anniversary of Bastille Day, and runs through September 24, 1989.

Works drawn from the Museum collection and from private lenders mirror the changes in taste that accompanied upheavals in politics. The French court before 1789 favored fanciful Rococo or elegant Neoclassicism. Chief among the drawings on exhibition exemplifying royal taste are those by François Boucher (1703-1770) and Jean Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806). The artist who most ardently identified with the Revolution, Jacques Louis David (1748-1825), influenced many fellow artists; an unidentified follower painted a young woman in simple "democratic" dress, titled La Citoyenne Crouzet. The return to aristocratic rule and taste is represented by a drawing dated 1856, portraying the Empress Eugenie receiving the diplomatic corps after the birth of the Prince Imperial; it is the work of Constantin Guys (1802-1893), one of the most prominent chroniclers of 19th-century Paris.

The contradictory influences of royalty and revolution made themselves felt in many small ways. Objects in the show are as diverse as decorative wall panels from great houses; a small patch box bearing a scene of the celebration of Bastille Day, the 14th July, 1790; and a snuff box with a portrait of Napoleon. A bronze sculpture of Joan of Arc was made by Princesse Marie-Christine d'Orleans (1813-1839), a member of the restored royal house. One of the Museum's recent, and most romantic,

acquisitions is the small gilded throne made after the Revolution in 1822. Its owner, Henri the Count de Chambord, was ten years old when he became King of France in 1830--and reigned for only sixteen days. Michael Miller, curator of drawings in the Museum's department of Prints and Drawings is organizing **Rococo, Revolution, Restoration**, with Anne Babcock, curatorial assistant in the department.

Public programs accompanying the exhibition at the Museum include lectures and gallery talks as well as films set in the period of the Revolution; a complete schedule of these programs is attached. Related offerings in other locations include a series of lectures and discussions at the Institute of Humanities, John Carroll University, on the topic, "The French Revolution: Unanswered Questions on Origins, Impacts of Terrorism, Accomplishments," June 19-23, from 6:30 to 9:15 pm each evening. The Cleveland Council on World Affairs and La Maison Française are sponsoring a dinner and discussion on the "Legacy of the French Revolution" with Patrick Talbot of the French Embassy, Washington, on July 6; and a reading at Case Western Reserve University of A Tale of Two Cities, by "Charles Dickens," portrayed by Bert Hornback, professor of English literature, The University of Michigan. Inquiries about these outside programs should be directed to their organizing institutions.

All programs are made possible in part by the Ohio Humanities Council, a state-based agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which makes grants to non-profit organizations in Ohio for public programs in the humanities.

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